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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 003574

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY'S IRAQ COORDINATOR ON TURKISH-IRAQI
COOPERATION

REF: A. ANKARA 3263

[1](#)B. ANKARA 3028

[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 1944

[1](#)D. BAGHDAD 1886

[1](#)E. BAGHDAD 2026

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Ambassador met with Turkey's Iraq Coordinator Oguz Celikkol on June 15 to discuss Turkey-Iraq cooperation. Meetings by Turkish PM Erdogan, FM Gul and other ministers with Iraqi DPM Salih and his delegation on the margins of the Turkey-Arab Economic Forum in Istanbul last week went well. Iraqi FM Zebari will visit Turkey on July 3; further visits are in the works. Problems with petroleum trading may be helped by reducing the number of Turkish companies involved. Turkey is ready to open two more border gates and perhaps a railroad, but timing is uncertain and Barzani is still a problem. The Iraq Neighbors foreign ministers meeting has been re-scheduled for July 8-9 in Tehran. The Iraqi National Accord Conference is delayed. Ambassador encouraged Turkey to help the UN help Iraq. Turkey will clarify a misunderstanding by Iraqi DPM Salih regarding the draft Turkey-Iraq security agreement (refs c and d). The trilateral talks on the PKK should be well-prepared and action-oriented. Turkey continues to resist on Iraq debt relief but is amenable to re-scheduling. End Summary.

Iraqi FM Zebari to Visit Turkey July 3; Future Visits

[1](#)2. (C) Celikkol said Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari is scheduled to make a bilateral visit to Turkey on July 3. He will meet with the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in Ankara and with businessmen and journalists in Istanbul. Celikkol said that Turkey has proposed an agreement on foreign ministry consultations to be signed by the foreign ministers during the visit. He noted it would not be particularly substantive or specific but that it would help create a positive atmosphere. He also said it would be

important for Zebari to strike the right tone when referring to the PKK and Kirkuk, particularly with the journalists. Celikkol said Turkey hopes that Iraqi PM Maliki will choose Turkey as his first country to visit, just like the previous Iraqi prime minister did. After that visit, PM Erdogan would be willing to reciprocate. Turkish Defense and Interior Ministries are finalizing formal invitations for the new Iraqi Defense and Interior Ministers to visit Turkey; invitations have already been verbally extended.

¶3. (C) Ambassador stated the Zebari visit would be timely since Turkish FM Gul will be going to Washington on July 5. He encouraged visits by the Turkish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to Baghdad as soon as possible to show support for the new government. These visits would offer Turkey a way to work directly on key issues, such as the PKK, Kirkuk and the composition of Iraqi government ministries.

Energy; Border Gates

¶4. (C) During DPM Salih's visit, Turkish Energy Minister Guler discussed energy cooperation with the Iraqi Oil Minister. Iraq complained of inefficiency on the part of Turkish companies involved in petroleum trading. After some discussion, the Iraqi oil minister agreed to assess the performance of the Turkish companies involved and reduce the number to the most reliable firms. Celikkol said Turkish Petroleum (TPAO) will send a delegation to Baghdad to discuss energy development and repair of the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline. Turkey sees natural gas as another avenue for cooperation.

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¶5. (C) Regarding border issues, Celikkol said Turkey's position remains: open up two more gates and a new railway between Turkey and Iraq. Barham Salih was told that the first new crossing could be the one preferred by the Kurds as long as there is a clear target date for opening Ovakoy, which Turkey supports. Barzani is still holding up the process, argued Celikkol. Ambassador encouraged progress, noting delay hinders trade and puts people in danger.

Iran: Neighbors Meeting Re-scheduled for July 8-9

¶6. (C) The delayed Iraq Neighbors foreign ministers meeting has now been re-scheduled to take place in Tehran on July 8-9, said Celikkol. The Iranians claim that Iraq has accepted this date, and Turkey believes it will be a useful venue at which to give the new Iraqi government support. Ambassador poured cold water on the idea.

Iraqi National Accord Conference Delayed

¶7. (C) Celikkol said the Iraqi National Accord Conference was postponed not only because it conflicted with the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Baku, but also because of security concerns and the desire to do more preparation beforehand to ensure positive results. He said for now it was pushed back several weeks but he believes it could ultimately be postponed until the fall. (Note: According to ref e, the conference is re-scheduled for the first week of August. End Note.)

UN Cooperation: Iraqi Compact; Answer No on UNAMI Plane

¶8. (C) Celikkol stated work has already started on the Iraqi Compact and Turkey is ready to contribute. The UN is taking the lead, which Turkey believes is important. Ambassador

pressed for a positive answer on requests regarding a C-130 for UNAMI. This would help further the more active UN role we both support. Celikkol said the military's response was no, but held out some hope the issue could be reconsidered.

Proposed GOT-GOI Security Agreement

¶9. (C) The Ambassador asked about progress made in discussing Turkey's proposal for a bilateral security agreement with Iraq (refs c and d). Celikkol said Iraqi DPM Salih in Istanbul raised a concern that the draft language referred to a border agreement under Saddam's regime, which Celikkol said is not the case. Turkey will undertake to explain the confusion -- that the reference to a 1989 agreement on legal and judicial matters is regarding extradition-type issues, not border control. Celikkol said he is concerned Iraqi DPM Salih may have regarded the proposed agreement through a negative lens and he hoped Iraq realized Turkey had no hidden agenda. Celikkol stated perhaps the agreement could be signed when the Iraqi PM comes for a visit.

Trilateral PKK Talks

¶10. (C) Ambassador said that we are starting to focus on the U.S.-Iraq-Turkey talks on the PKK to which Secretary Rice referred. Celikkol said it needs to be well-prepared, action-oriented and confidential so public expectations are not unduly raised. Ambassador agreed and said the initial

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session should happen sooner rather than later and should concentrate on what is possible and doable.

No Debt Relief for Iraq

¶11. (C) Ambassador urged that Turkey consider a more forthcoming position on Iraq debt relief. Other countries are writing off Saddam-era debt. Turkey should, too, and reap the benefits in terms of support for the new government. Celikkol said Turkey is not a rich enough country to consider debt relief. Re-scheduling is more realistic.

Support for Coalition Forces

¶12. (C) Ambassador briefed on recent discussion with the Turkish military regarding renewing Incirlik and Habur Gate agreements and a new request to allow retrograde movement of material and equipment from Iraq. Celikkol was generally aware of the issues and offered to help should a problem arise in the negotiations with the Turkish military. Celikkol said that \$2 million in military equipment is already earmarked for Iraq and will be announced when the Iraq defense minister visits.

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